

Job Analysis of Chiropractic

A project report, survey analysis,
and summary of the practice of
chiropractic within the United States



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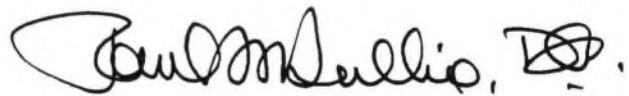
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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul M. Tullio, D.C.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul M. Tullio, D.C., President
National Board of Chiropractic Examiners

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“ . . . we sought to provide the chiropractic profession, including those served by the profession and those observing the profession, with the most credible, relevant, and accurate reference possible, one which documents chiropractic as it is practiced as a full-time profession.”

Preface

Presented in this book are analyzed data collected in 1991 and 1998 by the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners in its Survey of Chiropractic Practice.

As a well-established independent testing agency, the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) applied proven testing industry guidelines throughout each phase of this survey project, called a job analysis. In doing so, we sought to provide the chiropractic profession, including those served by the profession and those observing the profession, with the most credible, relevant, and accurate reference possible, one which documents chiropractic as it is practiced as a full-time profession.

These objectives have been met through the collective effort of members of our staff, members of the NBCE Job Analysis Steering Committee, private practitioners, statisticians, editors, and other professionals who helped produce a survey instrument and report of outstanding quality. In addition, a gratifying rate of survey response from members of the profession validated the survey's statistical data base.

It is this exhaustive commitment to excellence that so often distinguishes our profession, and it is largely what distinguishes this report, making it one which may have far-reaching significance in chiropractic health care for many years to come.

Sincerely,



Mark G. Christensen, Ph.D.

Director of Testing

National Board of Chiropractic Examiners

Introduction

The chronology of tests and measurements can be traced to the beginning of recorded history. Early writings describe processes including rituals that gauged the knowledge, wisdom, physical endurance, or bravery of ancient peoples.

At one time or another, through one form or another, mankind has always devised a means of assessing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of those seeking to meet recognized standards. As society has become more complex and specialized, and as the consequences of assessment decisions have become more weighty with procedures and results increasingly scrutinized, strict guidelines for obtaining reliable and valid test results have emerged. Today, these guidelines are established and refined by individuals, testing organizations, and the United States government.

In its role as the national and international testing agency for the chiropractic profession, the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners adheres to recognized guidelines, which facilitate the preparation and administration of fair, uniform, and valid tests.

Although there could be no “right” or “wrong” answers to the survey that formed the basis of this report, the testing guidelines clearly state that “Job analyses provide the primary basis for defining [test content]” (American Psychological Association 1985, 64).

Organization of the Report

While compiling data from the NBCE Job Analysis of Chiropractic, the authors were committed to providing comprehensive and accurate documentation of every aspect of the job analysis project. Repeatedly surfacing during the compilation process was the reminder that the readership of the report might well include individuals with a wide range of backgrounds and purposes and with varying degrees of familiarity with the fields of chiropractic and/or testing. This prevailing awareness affected the construction of the report in both content and format.

At every step, the authors presented the relevant data, then stepped back to assess whether the body of information offered previously in the text was sufficient to afford and facilitate comprehension by a full range of readers. In many cases, the authors resolved this question by including clarifying background information that had been presumed unnecessary at the outset of the project.

Additionally entering into the decision to include some passages of text was the need to acquaint the reader with the licensed practitioner of chiropractic, since it was this individual who collectively provided the data upon which the job analysis report is based. Thus, the authors have attempted to present an objective and well-rounded picture of the present-day chiropractor and his/her practice. Also addressed is the historical background of the profession and current information including educational requirements for becoming a chiropractor.

The information is often presented as a general overview, followed by a more detailed topical discussion presented chronologically. The editors have attempted to convey information through visual means where appropriate. A glossary of terms can be found in Appendix G of this report.

The first two chapters serve to familiarize the reader with chiropractic* and its practitioners, including the personal, educational, and professional criteria these individuals met in becoming *licensed practitioners of chiropractic*. Also presented is a description of major scientific studies, government inquiries, and legal action conducted relative to chiropractic.

Chapter Three provides background information relative to the regulation of occupational licensing. Here, the reader is acquainted with licensure and certification testing, as well as the legal aspects that shape regulatory agency requirements.

In Chapter Four, we find the procedures necessary to reap maximum project validity. This chapter discusses organization, development, and the research protocols observed in the job analysis project, from committees to field tests to the gathering of statistics and the design of the final survey.

Chapter Five describes the method and factors utilized in compiling the survey mailing list, tracking all components, tabulating the data, etc. A number of steps were taken to encourage a high rate of response. These are presented in this chapter.

Chapter Six provides an overview of the respondent chiropractors and patient demographics. Included is a summary of conditions, treatments, and professional activities within chiropractic practice. The subsequent chapters provide a detailed breakdown of the characteristics of the “typical” chiropractic practitioner (Chapter Seven) and the “typical” chiropractic patient (Chapter Eight) as indicated by the survey response data. Chapter Nine presents data concerning patient conditions and chiropractic management of those conditions.

The final chapter of the Job Analysis of Chiropractic report (Chapter Ten) summarizes the response data relative to professional functions, knowledge, and treatment procedures performed by the practitioners participating in the survey.

The appendices include the relevant forms and correspondence, the Survey of Chiropractic Practice, a glossary of terms, and a listing of survey participants. Their high rate of involvement enhanced the validity of the survey results.

* “Chiropractic” is generally used as a noun, although it may appear to be an adjective in many contexts.